

Serial No. 10/816,696
Amendment and Response to Office Action
Mailed: 6 December 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 12, 18, 21, and 24 are presently amended. Claims 1-25 remain pending. In view of the amendments above and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 11, 12, 14, and 24 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by El-Batel et al (PGPub US 2005/0057909).

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over El-Batel et al.

Claims 8, 18, and 20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over El-Batel et al in view of Wells (US Patent 4,237,546)

Claims 9, 10, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over El-Batel et al in view of Garnett et al. (PGPub US 2003/0030977).

Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boone (US 6,449,150 B1) in view of El-Batel et al.

Claim 23 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boone (US 6,449,150 B1) in view of El-Batel et al. and further in view of Wells.

Claims 4, 13, 19, and 25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating Claims 4, 13, 19 and 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form; however, Applicant believes these claims are allowable as they stand in view of the following remarks.

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El-Batel discloses a system that includes:

a disk based data storage system that has two sets of disk arrays that are mounted on separate backplanes. The backplanes and disk arrays are independent of each other such that the data storage system may function while one of the backplanes and disk arrays is removed for service. In some embodiments, one backplane may be placed into an enclosure rotated 180 degrees from the second backplane. [0010]

Thus, El-Batel's backplane portions are completely separate from each other and function in an individual manner. On the other hand, Applicant's backplane portions are configured to provide a connector pair such that each pluggable device connects to each connector of the pair on both backplane portions as described at paragraph [0010] and elsewhere of Applicant's application. Applicant's Claim 1 is amended to more clearly recite this innovative distinction: "wherein the first plane portion and the at least second plane portion are configured to both connect to each of the multiple pluggable devices." El-Batel does not disclose or suggest such a configuration. Claim 1 is therefore allowable over El-Batel.

Independent Claims 12, 18, and 24 contain similar recitations and are therefore also allowable over El-Batel for these same reasons.

Regarding Claim 21 and 22, El-Batel does not disclose "a connector pair comprising individual connectors mounted on spaced-apart plane portions which are spaced apart to define a gap between the individual plane portions..." Each of El-Batel's plane portions function alone and there is no teaching nor suggestion of connectors from the different plane portions forming a pair of connectors for connecting to an apparatus. Claims 21 and 22 are therefore allowable over El-Batel for this reason.

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Claim 1 has also been amended to more particularly point out: "the second plane portion being offset from the first plane portion to define a gap that is dimensioned to promote airflow via the gap through the enclosure." El-Batel discloses air movement parallel to the gap between the backplane portions (Fig 2, [0028]) but does not suggest that air moves "via the gap through the enclosure." Claims 21 and 24 have a similar limitation. Thus Claim 1, 21 and 24 are allowable over El-Batel for this further reason.

Similarly, Claim 12 recites: "...a gap that allows air entering from the front of the enclosure to escape at the back of the enclosure via the gap..." As discussed above, El-Batel does not teach or suggest that air flows through the enclosure via the gap.

Dependent Claims 2-11, 13-17, 18, 20, 22, 23, and 25 depend directly or ultimately on an allowable base Claims and are therefore allowable for this reason and by virtue of their further distinctive recitations. For example, Claim 15 recites: "the gap has a gap width between the first and second back plane portions that is no less than about one half of the enclosure height." Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, there is no reason for El-Batel to provide a gap this large since doing so would significantly reduce the number of disk drives that could be accommodated in the enclosure.

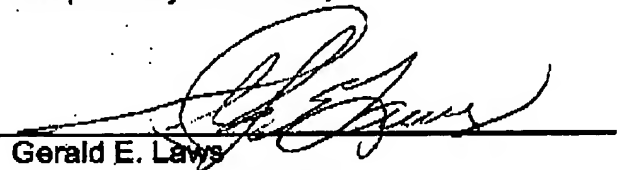
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Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. However, If the Examiner wishes to resolve any other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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